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**EVOLVING RUSSIAN MILITARY DOCTRINE:  
FORCE STRUCTURE AND CAPABILITIES  
OF THE ARMED FORCES**

by

Susan Terranova  
Major, United States Army

March 1993

**DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT A**

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93-18289



## REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE

1a. REPORT SECURITY CLASSIFICATION <b>UNCLASSIFIED</b>			1b. RESTRICTIVE MARKINGS <b>N/A</b>		
2a. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION AUTHORITY			3. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY OF REPORT  <b>UNLIMITED</b>		
2b. DECLASSIFICATION/DOWNGRADING SCHEDULE					
4. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER(S)			5. MONITORING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER(S)		
6a. NAME OF PERFORMING ORGANIZATION <b>ADVANCED RESEARCH DEPARTMENT</b>	6b. OFFICE SYMBOL (If applicable) <b>35</b>	7a. NAME OF MONITORING ORGANIZATION			
6c. ADDRESS (City, State, and ZIP Code) <b>US NAVAL WAR COLLEGE 686 CUSHING ROAD NEWPORT, RI 02841-1207</b>		7b. ADDRESS (City, State, and ZIP Code)			
8a. NAME OF FUNDING/SPONSORING ORGANIZATION	8b. OFFICE SYMBOL (If applicable)	9. PROCUREMENT INSTRUMENT IDENTIFICATION NUMBER			
8c. ADDRESS (City, State, and ZIP Code)		10. SOURCE OF FUNDING NUMBERS			
		PROGRAM ELEMENT NO.	PROJECT NO.	TASK NO.	WORK UNIT ACCESSION NO.
11. TITLE (Include Security Classification)  <b>EVOLVING RUSSIAN MILITARY DOCTRINE: FORCE STRUCTURE AND CAPABILITIES OF THE ARMED FORCES</b>					
12. PERSONAL AUTHOR(S) <b>TERRANOVA, SUSAN, MAJOR, UNITED STATES ARMY</b>					
13a. TYPE OF REPORT <b>FINAL</b>	13b. TIME COVERED <b>FROM 18 NOV 92 3 MAR 93</b>	14. DATE OF REPORT (Year, Month, Day) <b>3 MARCH 1993</b>	15. PAGE COUNT <b>103</b>		
16. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTATION					
17. COSATI CODES			18. SUBJECT TERMS (Continue on reverse if necessary and identify by block number)  <b>Russia, Military, Doctrine, Defensive, Restructure,</b>		
FIELD	GROUP	SUB-GROUP			
19. ABSTRACT (Continue on reverse if necessary and identify by block number)  (U) Military doctrine governs the direction of the armed forces in Russia. The draft doctrine emphasizes the need for adequate defense of the Russian borders. As the active duty force shrinks, force structure changes will occur. The changing geostrategic landscape and the political and economic problems within Russia has brought about the withdrawal of all forward deployed forces. This is a goal of the defensive doctrine. If internal order can be maintained, there is a chance the Russian military will survive into the next century as a smaller force, conducting limited operations.					
20. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY OF ABSTRACT <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNCLASSIFIED/UNLIMITED <input type="checkbox"/> SAME AS RPT. <input type="checkbox"/> DTIC USERS			21. ABSTRACT SECURITY CLASSIFICATION <b>UNCLASSIFIED</b>		
22a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE INDIVIDUAL <b>CDR I. W. KENNEDY, ASST. DIR. ARP</b>			22b. TELEPHONE (Include Area Code) <b>(401) 841-3304</b>	22c. OFFICE SYMBOL <b>35A</b>	

DD FORM 1473, 84 MAR

83 APR edition may be used until exhausted.

All other editions are obsolete

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF THIS PAGE

★ U.S. Government Printing Office: 1985-329-612

0102-LF-014-6602

NAVAL WAR COLLEGE  
Newport, R.I.

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FORCE STRUCTURE AND CAPABILITIES  
OF THE ARMED FORCES

by

DTIC QUALITY INSPECTED 3

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Major, United States Army

A paper submitted to the Faculty of the Naval War College in partial satisfaction of the requirements of the Advanced Research Program.

The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the Naval War College or the Department of the Navy.

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*2 MAR 93*  
Date

Accession For	
NTIS	CRA&I <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
DTIC	TAB <input type="checkbox"/>
Unannounced	<input type="checkbox"/>
Justification	
By	
Distribution/	
Availability Codes	
Dist	Avail and/or Special
A-1	

## **ABSTRACT**

Military doctrine governs the direction of the armed forces in Russia. The draft doctrine emphasizes the need for adequate defense of the Russian borders. As the active duty force shrinks, force structure changes will occur in the armed forces. The changing geostrategic landscape and the political and economic problems within Russia has brought about plans for the withdrawal of all forward deployed forces. This is a goal of the defensive doctrine. If internal order can be maintained, there is a chance the Russian military will survive into the next century as a smaller force, conducting limited operations.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The introduction of a new defensive doctrine by the Russian government, and the debate in progress by the military leadership, reflects the realities of the present geostrategic landscape and the Russian economy. As a sovereign nation, Russia wants to maintain the military capability to respond to a broadened array of threats.

Historically, since World War II, Russian doctrine has evolved in seven phases. The five offensive phases were: 1) the Stalin era, 1945-1953; 2) Transition, 1953-1959; 3) Nuclear First Strike, 1960-1967; 4) Flexible Response, 1967-1974 and 5) Power Projection 1974-1987. The defensive phases emphasize reasonable sufficiency. In the sixth phase, 1987-1991, the Soviet Union reduced her presense overseas and reduced the size of the armed forces. Phase seven is on-going as Russia withdraws troops from all foreign nations and cuts the size of the armed forces in half.

Gorbachev made a committment to withdraw forces from Eastern Europe and Mongolia and to reduce the armed forces by 500,000 as the first step in changing from an offensive to a defensive posture. The realization that the Soviet Union needed to develop a free market economy and democratic reform was also a factor in the move toward a defensive posture. The political aspect of Gorbachev's new doctrine completely

dismissed the use of force, or the threat of force, as a method to resolve differences among nations. Bi-lateral treaties between Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland and Germany became the vehicle to resolve the issues of withdrawal of all Soviet forces.

The only valid mission for the forward deployed Soviet forces during most of the 90's was to withdraw expeditiously to Russia. Retaining a nuclear arsenal, although greatly reduced in size, and participating in United Nations sanctioned peace-keeping operations, are the only two options left for Russia to project super-power status. The new doctrine incorporates both concepts.

The road to doctrinal reform began on 7 May 1992 with the formation of the Russian Armed Forces. The disintegration of the Soviet Union created some practical problems for Russia which led to political elements of the doctrine being implemented, even though it does not yet have the force of law. Foreign basing of Russian troops is an issue that required immediate attention. The withdrawal from Eastern Europe placed a burden on the Russian economy and exacerbated the long-time housing shortage as families returned to Russia with no place to live. The Baltic states of Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia, continue to exert pressure on Russia to leave, compounding the housing problem.

The General Staff Military Academy's Military Science Conference was held 27-30 May 1992 in an effort to debate the

implication of the new doctrine on the services. Branch chiefs argued the merits of the new doctrine and attempted to present views on how best to reorganize and reduce the size of the branches in order to accommodate new missions within the economic constraints placed upon the armed forces. Discussion on the military-technical aspects of the doctrine resulted in the proposal of a four-part program designed to insure that Russia continues to produce and develop high-tech weapons, complies with treaty obligations for the destruction of weapons and converts military plants into commercial enterprises. The proposal has not been implemented successfully.

The Russian threat environment has been reexamined and reclassified in two levels: military threat and military danger. As a matter of policy, Russia acknowledges that she has no inherent external enemies. Although Belarus, Ukraine and Kazakhstan have nuclear weapons, none of these countries have demonstrated an intent to take offensive action against Russia. On the other hand, long-standing inter-ethnic rivalries are a major source of instability and have the potential to escalate to armed conflict on a regional basis.

Five general categories of operations are outlined in the draft doctrine: 1) internal security and domestic disturbances, 2) peace-keeping, 3) local/regional war, 4) large scale conventional war and 5) nuclear war. Omni-directional defense is the new mechanism through which

operations will be conducted as Russia recognizes that threats are north-south in addition to east-west. New operations and defense concepts have caused all branches to rethink their force structure and assess their capabilities to perform assigned tasks.

The minimum requirements for Russia are a standing army, a coastal defense force and an air defense capability. The goal is to have no more than 1% of the population in the active armed forces. Strategic Rocket Forces continue to play a deterrent role against medium and smaller non-nuclear states. Ground Forces is the preeminent branch whose most important, and immediate, tasks are internal security and controlling domestic disturbances. Naval Forces are employed to defend the nation's maritime economic zone, combat smuggling and patrol against terrorism. Air Forces are still required to maintain air superiority over domestic air space and to refuel aircraft during air operations. Air Defense may be abolished as a service and resubordinated to either the Strategic Rocket Forces or the Air Force.

The Russian military will be able to carry out limited missions as outlined in the new doctrine. The economic situation requires drastic cutback in government spending if there is to be any money available for investment in commercial enterprises. The armed forces is an excellent place to reduce spending. Maintaining order and participating in peace-keeping operations do not require armored vehicles



and artillery, items required to be destroyed under treaty obligations. Peace-keeping units do require people, however, and the armed forces has adequate manpower to continue these operations.

The threat to the west is tied to the stability of the current Russian government. If hard-line military factions in Russia obtain control of the government, they might attempt to direct the economy to meet military requirements. Strident civil unrest is the likely outcome. Civilian control of the military, and the government, is essential for stability in Russia.

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**THE EVOLUTION OF SOVIET MILITARY DOCTRINE  
AND THE FUTURE OF THE RUSSIAN ARMED FORCES**

**CHAPTER I**

**INTRODUCTION**

Since the attempted coup in Moscow in August 1991, Western media and foreign policy experts have focused their attention on the disintegration of the Soviet Union and the alleged 'dismantlement' of its armed forces. News broadcasts frequently show file footage of past Soviet military parades through Red Square displaying the most modern weapons in contrast to the current squalor in which the Russian military now lives. Military officers are selling military equipment to obtain money to supplement the buying power of their meager incomes. Compounding the problem, Germany, Poland and the independent Baltic states are demanding a faster withdrawal of forward-deployed Russian forces. Such incidents give the impression that the Russian military is a 'paper tiger', composed of remnants of the former Soviet armed forces and totally combat ineffective. It is logical to assume this is a 'hollow military', lacking direction and having no capability to pose a serious threat to the United States or the international community. After nearly seven decades,

capitalism defeated the Soviet military without firing a single shot. The Soviet economy became exposed as a cruel hoax which impoverished an entire nation.

In spite of the Western euphoria of a 'cold war victory', an appropriate Western military and foreign policy response must be devised. In order to do this properly, the United States must understand and appreciate where the Russian military is going. Since military doctrine governs this direction, an examination of Russian military doctrine is required. Although the new draft doctrine of the Russian armed forces emphasizes defensive sufficiency, Western policy makers must give reasoned analysis to many questions in order to determine the true nature of the potential military threat posed by Russia. As the west and the United States reduce the size of their armed forces, they may be ignoring a latent Russian military capability. We should not automatically dismiss the possibility that Russia will never again exhibit a hostile intent beyond its borders which might threaten international peace and the national security interests of the United States. Reform and restructuring of the Russian military could cause problems for western military planners if serious consideration is not given to the direction the political and military leadership is taking the Russian armed forces. Ever since World War II, the Soviet military has focused its efforts on achieving a victory in a high-intensity coalition war concentrated on the Eurasian land mass. The

goal of protecting the Soviet Union without having to fight on her own territory was accomplished through the forward deployment of troops in Eastern Europe. The Russian political leadership now wants to concentrate on the defense of Russian borders and quell local conflicts. It is the job of the military to physically restructure itself to achieve the assigned missions.

Doctrine held a unique position in the framework of Soviet military thought. This position is maintained in the Russian hierarchy of military thinking as well. The evolving nature of Russian military doctrine in the post-Soviet era can provide an appropriate vehicle through which to examine the likely capabilities and employment of the armed forces in the future. In May 1992, the Russian General Staff published its draft military doctrine. It appeared in a special edition of Voennaya Mysl' (Military Thought), its monthly military-theoretical journal. Subsequent debate, public statements by the leadership, and action by the military suggests the common perception of a demoralized, ineffective Russian army is short-sighted. Military planners in the west should not misinterpret defensive sufficiency and dismiss the intent and residual capabilities of the military of the only nation which can pose a legitimate and overwhelming threat, not only to the United States, but to the internal stability of Russia itself.

The current debate by the political and military leadership reflects the realities both of the present

geostrategic landscape and the Russian economy. As a sovereign nation, Russia needs to respond to a broadened array of threats during a transitory period in her history. The short-range emphasis will be on reducing and restructuring the military. They will need to concentrate on activities which will support the legitimacy of the state, such as controlling inter-ethnic conflict. Economic constraints will have an impact, however, Russian statements and actions in the post-Soviet era suggest a clear, long-term intent to retain a future capability to use the entire spectrum of force, conventional and nuclear weapons, in pursuit of national policy objectives. As the Russian military doctrine evolves further, it will lay the basis for a military which will be capable of defensive missions.

Soviet military doctrine has evolved from World War II through the Gorbachev era. However, an in-depth examination of the 1992 Russian draft military doctrine illustrates both similarities and differences in current thinking and previous Soviet doctrine. The changes reflect Russian acknowledgment of her altered position in the geostrategic landscape. Based upon current trends and key Russian statements and actions, there are many questions about the present and future Russian military capability to carry out the operational missions envisioned by the 1992 doctrine. Internal instability and the possibility of external threats will contribute to the evolution of the current doctrine, albeit in an uncertain

direction.

If Russia is attempting seriously to change the nature and capabilities of its armed forms, there are some logical policy responses which the political and military leadership of the United States should pursue. The open press throughout Russia freely reports the ongoing debate in Russian military thought in newspapers and journals. As we approach the 21st century, America should be prepared to deal with any potential threat to our vital interests from Russian military action. Russian doctrine and capabilities suggests that the future Russian armed forces will be effective and able to fulfill their assigned missions.

## **CHAPTER II**

### **HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF DOCTRINE**

Doctrinal changes have been necessary as a result of the changing world environment in which the Soviet Union and Russia finds itself. The experience of the Soviet armed forces since World War II has been that of continual reorganization, restructuring and reduction in response to changes in doctrine. It should come as no surprise, then, that Russian political and military leaders have devised a new doctrine for the armed forces they inherited from the former Soviet Union. Doctrine today, as it has been in the past, is forward-looking. It is not a statement of the capabilities of the armed forces as they exist at the current point in time, but a direction for the future. A brief look at the history of Soviet doctrine since 1945 illustrates this point.

For the purposes of this paper, Soviet/Russian military doctrine has evolved through seven phases since World War II. Each change resulted in a restructuring of the force, if not a change in mission. During the first five phases the Soviet Union assumed an offensive posture. Responding first and foremost to the needs of the armed forces, the nation's economy supplied the military with with the most modern equipment available. Improvements in technology were a



fundamental imperative to the nation's ability to carry out its military objectives. Gorbachev commenced revision of doctrine in 1987. Although it did not become effective until 1990, the Soviet Union moved toward a defensive posture in the deployment of her armed forces.

The first phase of post-World War II doctrine began with Stalin in 1945 and ended with his death in 1953. Phase two was a period of transition lasting from 1953-59. During this time Khrushchev attempted to de-Stalinize the services and considered nuclear weapons as a viable first strike option. The third phase began in 1960 with the creation and domination of the Strategic Rocket Forces. Phase four began in 1967 and was the doctrine of 'flexible response'. Phase five, the final offensive phase, lasted from 1974-1987 when Soviet forces deployed beyond the Warsaw Pact (and Cuba) and became involved in low and mid-intensity conflicts in Africa and Asia. The sixth and seventh phase are defensive, rather than offensive, in philosophy. Changes in force structure, and reasons for engaging in conflict in a defensive environment, are discussed in Chapters 4 and 5.

## **PHASE I**

Immediately following World War II, a drastic reduction of active duty armed forces commenced. This was mitigated by an improvement in weapons technology. Stalin did not have a

doctrine, instead he had a military theory based on five operating principles:

- strength of the rear
- morale of the army
- quantity and quality of the divisions
- armaments of the army
- organizational ability of the army commanders<sup>1</sup>

Although the Soviet Union continued to develop nuclear weapons during this era, Soviet war plans did not focus on their use in battle. Although the operating principles specifically mention the army, success on the battlefield required the proper use of all branches of service. Curiously, the element of surprise was not considered a factor in successful operations. From a Soviet perspective, World War II represented a political victory for Communism as East Europe and several Asian states opted for Communism as a model form of government. Stalin believed that war was inevitable, however, demobilization allowed the nation to concentrate on the military-technical aspects of policy. Individuals released from active duty returned to work in factories, which ultimately provided more modern weapons for the conduct of war.

The demobilization of the Soviet Army was a process that lasted approximately three years. By 1948, only 40% of the ground forces on active duty at the conclusion of World War II remained in uniform.<sup>2</sup> The ground forces remained the

preeminent branch of service and consistent with Stalin's five operating principles, reorganized accordingly. An emphasis on greater mobility and increased fire power supported the requirement for increased quality in the force. Although the aggregate number of divisions (formerly corps) decreased, mobility of the remaining force increased. Further restructuring occurred in the rifle corps. None of these units had been motorized before the war - after the war, all units received enough vehicles to transport troops. In addition, manning authorizations increased 12%.<sup>3</sup>

Improving the armaments of the army, Stalin's fourth operating principle, came about with the introduction of the T-54 tank into tank divisions. This represented an upgrade in firepower and mobility for the ground forces. Artillery became more mobile with the introduction of new prime movers. Other enhancements included an upgrade in rocket weapon systems, increased water-crossing capability for engineer units and the integration of enhanced shortwave systems for signal communications.<sup>4</sup>

Clearly, Stalin viewed the West as the main threat to the Soviet Union. The United States not only survived World War II, emerging stronger economically and militarily, but held a monopoly on nuclear weapons. Stalin's operating principles guided the economy to produce the quality of weapons required by the army as much as they were a guide to the army on how to conduct operations. Without employing a nuclear capability,

Stalin created a force with the intent of destroying the enemy, on the ground, and in Europe, as a deterrent to an American nuclear attack. War was inevitable from a Soviet perspective and a quick victory with a highly mobile force armed with enhanced firepower was crucial.

## PHASE II

Phase two of Soviet military doctrine is a transition phase commencing with the death of Stalin in 1953 and lasting until 1959. A gradual de-bunking of the five operating principles occurred concurrently with the general de-Stalinization campaign within the Soviet Union. War was no longer considered to be inevitable. However, there was an understanding that once started, war might quickly escalate to a nuclear confrontation. The Soviet Union had developed, and tested, hydrogen bombs and inter-continental ballistic missiles were entering the Soviet weapons' arsenal. The use of nuclear weapons in the conduct of war was no longer summarily excluded as a possibility. Following Khrushchev's speech before the Party Congress in 1956, calling for a re-examination of the philosophy of military science, military doctrine incorporated the employment of nuclear weapons. Against a backdrop that the best assurance of 'victory in a nuclear war is pre-empting the enemy's nuclear attack' was the idea that one side could emerge victorious in a nuclear

confrontation.<sup>5</sup>

The incorporation of a nuclear weapons policy into military doctrine required a change in the structure of the military. The armed forces at the time consisted of the Ground Forces (General Purpose Forces), the Air Force and the Navy. All services became nuclear capable, however, ground forces still received the bulk of the manning of the armed forces. Missile Troops was created as a new branch of service. Nuclear weapons were no longer relied upon as the one system which could defeat the West. The production, upgrading and integration of conventional weapons into the service arsenals continued. At a minimum, conventional forces would be required to occupy territory abandoned after a nuclear attack.

Marshal of the Tank Troops Rotmistrov, in an article published in Voennaya Mysl' in 1955, noted that "it is entirely clear that atomic and hydrogen weapons alone, without the decisive operations of the ground forces with their contemporary material, cannot decide the outcome of the war."<sup>6</sup> Thus, doctrine developed during this transition period was not a reflection of the status of the force at the time, but an indicator of where the Soviet Union would be concentrating its efforts as the force evolved in the 1950's following Stalin's death. Surprise was recognized as critical to a quick victory in war even though Stalin did not consider surprise an important element of success. Also important to the process

was an open forum that took place within the Soviet Military concerning military science. Unlike doctrine, which operates under the force of law, military science is open to discussion and interpretation.

### **PHASE III**

The third phase in the evolving Soviet military doctrine had its origins in Khrushchev's speech before the Supreme Soviet on 14 January 1960. He announced a further reduction of 1.2 million troops, but made it clear that this would not mean a reduction in firepower capability of the Soviet Union. Bomber production was halted and submarines replaced surface ships in importance.<sup>7</sup> Rocket strikes would initiate war 'deep into the interior' of the enemy state and would specifically attack industrial and administrative centers and strategic areas. In addition, he alleged that the Soviet Union would continue to build sufficient rockets to maintain her lead over the United States until both nations could agree on the reduction of these weapons.<sup>8</sup>

Minister of Defense Marshal Malinovskiy, in a session of the Twenty Second Party Congress held in October 1961 stated that if war were to occur, where one participant was an imperialist aggressor attacking the Soviet Union, it would inevitably take the form of a nuclear war with rockets delivering the warheads. Failure to prevent war would be so

destructive that the country would become a barren wasteland. Victory would require the effort of all branches of the armed forces.<sup>9</sup> Doctrine did not embrace the notion that war was inevitable, only that it would quickly escalate to a nuclear confrontation. Malinovskiy even alluded to the idea that the United States might wage local, conventional wars for fighting the Soviet Union in a non-nuclear environment.<sup>10</sup>

This radical departure from the military thinking of the previous decade required a change in force structure. In 1961, the Strategic Rocket Forces became a branch of service in the Soviet Armed Forces. As noted in the Officer's Handbook of the Soviet Officer's Library Series, the Strategic Rocket Forces was the main service of the Soviet Union. It was the best equipped of all forces and was organized as an independent service to "more rapidly and directly inflict massed nuclear strikes on the aggressor."<sup>11</sup> In the event the Soviet Union found itself in a conflict with China, she had a deep strike capability. (This capability existed against the West, of course, but was not without serious consequences. In addition, to hold the terrain, the Ground Forces would have to operate in a nuclear environment.) Some modernization occurred with the introduction of the T-64 tank, which increased the firepower and maneuverability of the Ground Forces. The Air Force and Navy suffered during this time, however, because the allocation of scarce resources went elsewhere. In addition, the manpower pool of conscripts was

shrinking as a reduced post-war baby population reached draft age. As a result, the new force structure of the Armed Forces provided the Soviet Union with a deep strike nuclear capability with a follow-on force of uncertain effectiveness.

#### PHASE IV

NATO's adoption of the policy of flexible response in 1967 was the catalyst for another change in Soviet military doctrine. If NATO launched nuclear weapons in Europe, the belief in the west was that the Soviet Union could successfully conduct a nuclear attack against the United States. This required a change in military policy regarding the defense of Western Europe. Confrontations against Warsaw Pact forces most likely would assume the characteristics of small, local wars which the use of conventional forces by NATO could resolve. Under such a circumstance there would be no need to employ nuclear weapons unless the United States received a direct attack from the Soviet Union. Here a requirement for a second strike capability would exist. It was in this context that the Soviets developed a counter to NATO's flexible response.

In the fifth edition of Marxism-Leninism on War and the Army, the author acknowledges that "even though nuclear weapons will play a decisive role in the war, final victory



over the aggressor can be achieved only as a result of the actions of all the arms of the services..."<sup>12</sup> Following a speech by Soviet Minister of Defense Marshal Grechko to the All-Army Conference of Young Officers, an article appeared in Kraznaya Zvezda on 27 November 1969. Grechko believed that all units had to prepare to wage combat under both nuclear and non-nuclear conditions. This, of course, would require the appropriate mix of weapons in the force. Subsequent discussions within the armed forces continued along the same theme - nuclear exchanges between the United States and the Soviet Union were no longer inevitable. From a Soviet perspective, three important assumptions regarding nuclear war had to be modified in terms of military doctrine during the 1960's. First, the Soviet Union could not operate under the assumption that a preemptive nuclear strike against the United States would prevent the nuclear destruction of the Soviet Union. Second, a second-strike nuclear capability on the part of the United States meant that a nuclear response to Soviet aggression in the European theater was not the option of choice for NATO, therefore, nuclear war was not inevitable. Finally, NATO had opted for a strong conventional force to counter Soviet aggression and retained nuclear weapons for their deterrent value.<sup>13</sup> The Soviet Union could no longer justify the first use of nuclear weapons.

Some obvious changes in force structure were now required of the military. Production of ballistic missiles did not

come to a halt, however, and the Strategic Rocket Forces received improved equipment. Six new versions of surface-to-surface delivery systems were fielded, yielding a five-fold increase in the Intercontinental Ballistic Missile Deployment (ICBM) from 224 to 1,597 during the period 1965 - 1975.<sup>14</sup> As a counter to NATO's flexible response policy, the Ground Forces took on added importance and an extra twenty-four motorized rifle divisions went into active service. In addition, all thirty divisions deployed in the forward area (East Germany, Poland, Czechoslovakia and Hungary) were rated 'Category I' (on a scale of I-IV), meaning they had between 75 and 100% of their war authorized equipment and assigned personnel. They were combat capable, fully trained and ready to deploy. Half these divisions were tank divisions, which had received the most modern tanks - T-64's and T-72's - available.

#### PHASE V

The final phase of offensive Soviet military doctrine began in 1974 when Grechko wrote that military forces of the Soviet Union were no longer restricted to defending the Motherland or socialist friends and neighbors.<sup>15</sup> Simply put, this shift in position gave blanket permission for Soviet forces to go beyond their borders and intervene wherever the nation felt its vital interests were at risk. Admiral

Gorshkov, in his 1976 book The Sea Power of the State, expanded on Grechko's statements and applied them to naval roles and operations. With the understanding that the Soviet Union was going to project power beyond her borders, the Navy needed the capability to threaten and defeat the enemy at sea. The chief mission of the naval forces during war was to be able to defeat land forces from sea.<sup>16</sup>

The mandate to protect Soviet vital interests in the era of power projection did not require a restructuring of the armed forces. However, it did cause the Soviet Union to prevent 'counter-revolution' against the principles of Marxism-Leninism through non-traditional means. De-colonization of Africa provided fertile territory for the spread of Soviet influence beyond its borders through the sale of arms, the dispatch of military advisors, economic aid, the use of proxies, and treaties. During the period 1974 - 1980 arms sales to third world nations totalled \$37 billion - more than triple the value of the sales of the 20 preceding years.<sup>17</sup> In the following six years Iraq, Syria and Libya alone received more than \$5 billion in arms transfers.<sup>18</sup> (States receiving more than \$1 billion in this time period were Cuba, Algeria, Angola, Ethiopia, Yemen, India, Afghanistan and Vietnam.) Soviet military personnel stationed throughout the Third World in an advisory capacity during this time numbered approximately 24,000 with an addition 115,000 in Afghanistan.<sup>19</sup> Through the client state of Cuba, the Soviet

Union achieved great success in power projection in Nicaragua and several sub-Saharan African nations.

The offensive era of Soviet doctrine came to a crashing halt in 1987. Ironically, it was neither a cataclysmic nuclear clash of two super-powers, nor a protracted conventional war on the European land mass that led to radical surgery of Soviet military thought. Internal events, against which military doctrine can provide no guidance, led to the collapse of the Soviet Union and the emergence of the Russian state. Gorbachev's policy of 'glasnost' and 'perestroika', openness and restructuring, exposed the weakness of seventy years of the failed experiment with Marxism-Leninism. The armed forces, long the beneficiary of the best the Soviet Union had to offer, now had to face the same hard reality that all segments of Soviet society were facing - doing more with less.

#### END NOTES

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15. Scott, The Armed Forces of the USSR, p. 57.

16. Derek Leebaert et al., Soviet Military Thinking, (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1981), p. 137.

17. Department of Defense, Soviet Military Power, (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1981), p.88.

18. Ibid., 1987, p. 128-129.

19. Ibid., 1983, 1985, and 1987 illustrate the basing of Soviet forces world-wide and the amount of aid distributed, both monetary and weapons.

## CHAPTER III

### GORBACHEV AND THE DEFENSE

The initial debate on a new defensive doctrine, stressing reasonable sufficiency, began in 1987. Although it did not have the force of law, Gorbachev acted on some of the proposals contained in the draft while the Soviet General Staff continued to debate some of the details. One proposal involved a reduction of forces deployed outside of the Soviet Union, with the ultimate goal of no forward basing of the military. Eventually the Warsaw Pact would cease to exist. It was against this backdrop on 7 December 1988 at the United Nations that Gorbachev announced unilateral withdrawals from Eastern Europe. <sup>1</sup>

Gorbachev's original intent in his 7 December speech was probably to illustrate the 'sincerity' behind the 'defensive' intent of the new doctrine. Gorbachev made a commitment to withdraw forces from Eastern Europe and Mongolia and to reduce the active duty armed forces by 500,000 as the first step in changing from an offensive to defensive posture.<sup>2</sup> The program called for six tank divisions and 11 independent regiments from Eastern Europe to return to the Soviet Union. In addition, tank and motorized rifle divisions in the Western and Northern Group of Forces (East Germany and Poland) began

to reorganize and to reduce the number of tanks in their remaining units. (A tank division converted two of its four tank regiments to motorized rifle regiments. A motorized rifle division lost its one tank regiment and now consisted of four motorized rifle regiments.) This restructuring began in earnest as the first tank division departed the forward area in May 1989.<sup>3</sup> In his address Gorbachev neglected to mention that only older equipment was returning to the Soviet Union. At the conclusion of the first year of withdrawals, over half of the divisions remaining in East Germany were equipped with the T-80 tank; the remainder had the improved T-64, many equipped with reactive armor.<sup>4</sup> The new 'defensive' stance was not a degradation in fire power or in mobility and was a cause for concern among western analysts.

Units returning from the forward area to the Soviet Union did not always relocate as divisions. Often they did not even keep their equipment. In some cases, units were disbanded or downgraded in size to mobilization bases. Older equipment found its way to open storage depots beyond the Urals. (This had also been the experience of units returning to the Soviet Union from Afghanistan.) Maintenance, historically a problem in units ready to deploy, was virtually non-existent in Siberian storage areas, rendering the equipment virtually useless. If the intent was to use the stored equipment for the future defense of the Soviet Union, a massive maintenance stand-down and construction program to provide covered storage



would have been required.

Although the stated policy was that the military was shifting toward a defensive posture, the full military potential of the country could only be realized if its economic, scientific-technical, and moral-political potential could be realized.<sup>5</sup> The new 'openness', with respect to the Soviet economy, exposed its under-developed nature - food was difficult to obtain, housing was in disrepair and insufficient to house soldiers and their families. Many areas of the country still remained off-limits to foreigners. Research and development, instrumental in providing the armed forces with upgraded weapons systems, did not receive adequate funding. High rates of alcoholism, previously viewed as societal problems, began to spill over into the military and to affect performance.

Gorbachev's realization that the Soviet Union needed to develop a free market economy and actively pursue democratic reform was, no doubt, a factor in the move toward a defensive posture. After more than a decade of global power projection, the Soviet Union had few allies. Foreign basing, naval and air deployments and intra-bloc military exercises had declined. Nations that received foreign aid from the Soviet Union on a long-term basis could not be considered allies. Even the countries of Eastern Europe, heavily dependent upon the Soviet Union for oil supplies, were succeeding in forcing the Soviets from their countries. A reasoned assessment of

relationships the Soviet Union enjoyed with her global neighbors revealed some disturbing facts.

The country's only genuine ally in North and South America was Cuba, who provided an ever-increasing drain on Soviet national wealth. In Europe, even the Warsaw Pact nations, who clearly could not display open hostility against the Soviet Union, were nevertheless acting independently and generally to the detriment of Moscow. Greece, although not aggressively anti-Soviet, was still a member of NATO<sup>6</sup> and not useful as a vehicle to publicly display divisiveness in NATO policy. Syria and South Yemen were the only major purchasers of Soviet military hardware in the Middle East. With the exception of Libya in North Africa, only four sub-Saharan nations - Angola, Congo, Ethiopia and Madagascar were host to more than 1,000 Soviet Military and Technical Personnel.<sup>7</sup> Asia was proving to be a difficult area, as well. In spite of a Mutual Defense Treaty with North Korea and a Friendship Treaty with India, Soviet influence in Asia was waning. In the Far East, only Cambodia and Vietnam remained as allies, providing naval port and air access to the Soviets. The decision to withdraw from Afghanistan was an additional signal to the West that the cost of foreign intervention, both in monetary and manpower terms, was coming at too high a price for the Soviets. Although Moscow did face foreign hostility on a global scale, it was only NATO which had the capability to cause serious damage to the Soviet infrastructure with

hostile actions. With the intention of making domestic improvements, Gorbachev sought to protect the state borders while reducing his presence in Europe.

Although the debate began in 1987, it was not until 30 November 1990 that the new Soviet military doctrine, stressing reasonable sufficiency, became law. As outlined in Chapter 2, doctrine is derived from the state's national policy. As stated in Voennaya Mysl', "the military doctrine of the USSR stems from the need. . . of insuring the defense capability of the country. . . The USSR believes that the immediate threat of world war has successfully been put aside. . ."<sup>8</sup> The two aspects of doctrine, political and military-technical, were clearly delineated.

The political aspect of the new doctrine completely dismisses Clausewitz's notion that war is an extension of politics. On the contrary, the use of force, or even the threat of force, was dismissed as a method to resolve differences among nations. The bi-lateral agreements on the withdrawal of Soviet Forces reached with Czechoslovakia, Hungary, East Germany and Poland are the best examples of use of diplomacy vice force to negotiate differences. The doctrine delineated the use of the armed forces. Some of the parameters for their employment included:

- no first use of nuclear weapons
- reduction of nuclear and conventional arms
- transition to real disarmament

- armed forces will not be deployed in military conflicts that are not directly connected to the defense of the country
- assign forces to UN peace-keeping missions
- eliminate chemical weapons
- eliminate means of surprise attack
- station troops only within national boundaries, eliminating a need for the Warsaw Pact and NATO<sup>9</sup>

The aims of the doctrine were merely a reflection of the reality faced by the Soviets in the late 1980's. Nuclear and conventional arms treaties with the United States and NATO were either already in effect or actively being drafted. The INF Treaty had been put into force and destruction of tactical nuclear weapons was already under way with US observation. An agreement on the Conventional Forces in Europe, which called for the destruction and removal of conventional armaments (belonging to the Soviet Union, non-Soviet Warsaw Pact nations and NATO) from the Atlantic to the Ural Zone<sup>10</sup> was soon to be signed. Soviet troops stationed in eastern Europe were increasingly targets of hostility of local nationals. The situation was particularly acute in Germany, because the 'host nation government' repeatedly refused to prosecute crimes against Soviet soldiers committed by Germans. De facto confinement of Soviet troops to their barracks and contiguous training areas was the result.

The reality of bi-lateral treaties negotiated with

Czechoslovakia and Hungary to remove all Soviet forces, forced the fulfillment of some political aspects of the new doctrine. The goal of stationing Soviet forces only within her national boundaries and the elimination of the Warsaw Pact was coming to fruition. The UN speech called for a reduction of 10,000 tanks, and other equipment, from the Soviet force as a whole. Removal of six tank divisions and assorted regiments and battalions from the forward area was no longer the mandate. East European governments, asserting their rights of sovereign government, demanded and received, bi-lateral agreements from the Soviet Union for the removal of all Soviet forces. As a result, all Soviet forces had to be removed from Czechoslovakia and Hungary by 31 December 1991. Poland aggressively sought a similar agreement and after at least a dozen discussions, succeeded in forcing all Soviet combat units to leave by the close of 1992. The remaining logistical tail, (required by the Soviets to support the withdrawal from Germany) had to leave by the end of 1993.

The unification of Germany in October 1991 caused the Soviet Union to be in the unique position of being forward deployed in a NATO country. An agreement with the German government to withdraw completely by the end of 1994 was quickly reached after extracting \$8 billion and the promise of 36,000 apartments to be constructed in the Soviet Union for servicemen and their families returning from the Western Group of Forces. Training restrictions were placed on Soviet forces

by the German government and massive amounts of equipment and material needed to be removed from German territory. The only valid operational mission of the Western Group of Forces was to withdraw from Germany as quickly as possible. Doctrine became forward-looking in a manner probably never anticipated by Gorbachev.

Retaining nuclear weapons and contributing to United Nations peace-keeping units were the only two options remaining to the Soviet Union if she wanted to project some vestige of super-power status. Nuclear weapons would give the Soviets the capability to defend her borders in a 'no first use' scenario, in concert with provisions of the defensive doctrine. Deployment of troops under the auspices of a United Nations peace-keeping effort would afford the Soviets the opportunity to have a presence on foreign soil without the manning and economic costs involved in establishing foreign bases.

Of lesser importance in the doctrine is the military-technical aspect. Here the Soviet Union recognized the primary threat came from conventional conflicts in Europe and the Asian-Pacific arena, rather than a nuclear threat from the United States. A restructuring of the armed forces was to be developed around four concepts: 1) local wars could occur at any time in any region and escalate to a world war; 2) conventional wars could escalate to nuclear war; 3) precision guided munitions would be the weapon of choice in the future

and infrastructure would be their main target; and, 4) nuclear war will be global in nature, regardless of origin, and will have no winners.<sup>11</sup> With a peacetime mission of maintaining 'reasonable sufficiency' and a wartime mission of repelling aggression and restoring peace, restructuring of the armed forces was begun in earnest when withdrawal from Eastern Europe began in May 1989. Tables 1 and 2 illustrate the reduction in major pieces of equipment and missiles from 1988 to 1991.

The 1990 doctrine appeared to be a blue print for the new direction of the Soviet Armed Forces. Reductions were well underway as reflected by the numbers in Charts 1 and 2. Restructuring occurred as weapons and equipment of all services were retired. External factors, such as the collapse of the Warsaw Pact, the disintegration of Germany and constraints placed upon the Soviet Union through arms control, brought some of the original intents enunciated in the first defensive doctrine to fruition. Some of the original goals were the elimination of the Warsaw Pact, no foreign basing of Soviet troops and a real reduction in nuclear and conventional weapons. Unforeseen in 1987, however, was the disintegration of the Soviet Union. The failure of the Commonwealth of Independent States paved the way for the formation of 15 additional armed forces on the territory of the Soviet Union. In May of 1992, Yeltsin and the Soviet General Staff,

## CHANGES IN FORCE STRUCTURE CONVENTIONAL FORCES

	<u>1988</u>	<u>1990</u>	<u>1991</u>
<b>TACTICAL AIRCRAFT</b>	5,170	4,110	3,640
<b>GROUND FORCES</b>			
MOTORIZED RIFLE DIVISION	150	127	100
TANK DIVISIONS	52	45	32
AIRBORNE DIVISIONS	7	7	47
<b>NAVAL FORCES</b>			
AIRCRAFT CARRIERS	4	4	0
LARGER PRINCIPLE SURFACE COMBATANTS*	116	105	103
SMALLER FRIGATES AND CORVETTES*	131	121	88
MCM SHIPS*	114	105	87
ASW COMBATANTS*	119	120	92
AMPHIBIOUS WARFARE SHIPS*	81	82	67
BALLISTIC MISSILE SUBMARINES	69	63	59
NAVAL AVIATION	1,761	1,369	1,310
<b>STRATEGIC DEFENSE FORCES</b>			
INTERCEPTORS	2,250	2,200	2,200
SAM LAUNCHERS	9,000	8,000	6,700
ABM LAUNCHERS	100	100	100
<b>EQUIPMENTS</b>			
TANKS	48,550	42,050	39,975
ARMORED PERSONNEL CARRIERS / INFANTRY FIGHTING VEHICLES	56,600	54,660	54,300
ARTILLERY	43,800	34,743	38,000
TACTICAL SSMs	1,520	1,290	1,340

(SOURCE: SOVIET MILITARY POWER 1988, 1990, 1991)

\*CHANGE IN REPORTING PROCEDURE EXCLUDES COMPARISON OF 1988 FIGURES WITH 1990 FORWARD. THEREFORE, 1989 NUMBERS ARE USED TO ILLUSTRATE THE DECLINE IN NAVAL SHIP INVENTORY.



# **CHANGES IN FORCE HOLDINGS** **NUCLEAR FORCES**

	<u>1988</u>	<u>1990</u>	<u>1991</u>
<b>NUCLEAR FORCES</b>			
<b>FIXED AND MOBILE ICBMs</b>			
SS-11	420	335	296
SS-13	60	40	40
SS-17	138	70	44
SS-18	308	308	308
SS-19	350	300	300
SS-25	@100	@270	315
SS-24 (MOD 1)	@ 10	@ 30	36
SS-24 (MOD 2)		@ 56	56
<b>SLBMs</b>			
SS-N-5	36	0	0
SS-N-6	256	192	176
SS-N-8	286	286	280
SS-N-17	12	12	0
SS-N-18	224	224	224
SS-N-20	100	120	120
SS-N-23	64	112	112
<b>LRINF</b>			
SS-4	52	0	0
SS-20	441	129	0
<b>BOMBERS</b>			
BACKFIRE	321	330	315
BEAR	160	159	140
BADGER	272	70	60
BLINDER	135	120	135

(SOURCE: SOVIET MILITARY POWER 1988, 1990, 1991)

recognizing the hopelessness of the situation, formally established the Russian Armed Forces. Immediately, work began on a draft doctrine for this new military organization.

#### END NOTES

1. Mikhail Gorbachev appeared before the United Nations General Assembly on 7 December 1988 and made this announcement.

2. Although not stated at the time, the reduction in the total standing force was the first step in an attempt to reform the armed forces.

3. The release of the declaration data under the requirements of the Conventional Forces in Europe Treaty indicates that this reorganization was only a 'test' being done in East Germany and Poland. This structure did not surface in the Soviet Union and the stepped up timetable of total withdrawal of Soviet Forces in the forward area revealed virtually no standard force structure at all.

4. This analysis is derived from reviewing the declaration data provided by the Soviet Union in November 1990 under the provisions of the Conventional Forces in Europe Treaty.

5. William C. Green et al., Gorbachev and His Generals: The Reform of Soviet Military Doctrine (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1990), pp. 8-9.

6. Walter Laqueur et al., Soviet Union 2000: Reform or Revolution? (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1990), p.157.

7. Department of Defense, Soviet Military Power: An Assessment of the Threat (Washington, DC 1988), pp. 132-133.

8. A. H. Vashinov, ed., "Proyekt Dokumenta O Voennoy Doktrina", Voennaya Mysl', Spetsialnii Vipusk, 1990, p.24.

9. Ibid., pp. 25-26.

10. The Atlantic-to-the-Ural Zone (ATTU) is defined as the former East Germany, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria and the Soviet Union west of the Urals - Moscow, Leningrad, Volga, Kiev Military Districts.

11. A. H. Vashinov, ed., Voennaya Mysl', pg. 26.

## **CHAPTER IV**

### **DOCTRINAL DEBATE AND MISSIONS OF THE ARMED FORCES**

The road to doctrinal reform began 7 May 1992 with the formation of the Russian Armed Forces. The Commonwealth of Independent States collapsed as an organization, in part because of a conflict of loyalty among members of the armed services. On 18 May 1992, Army General Pavel Grachev became Minister of Defense and, on the following day, the Russian Draft Military Doctrine made its debut for public debate. At the end of May, a Military Symposium brought together high-ranking military leaders whose mission was to use the draft to thrash out a new direction for the Russian Armed Forces. The basic questions of doctrine remained: accept or reject war as a means to achieve political goals, define the danger, decide the goals in a future war, the force structure required to achieve the strategic objective and the way to fight.

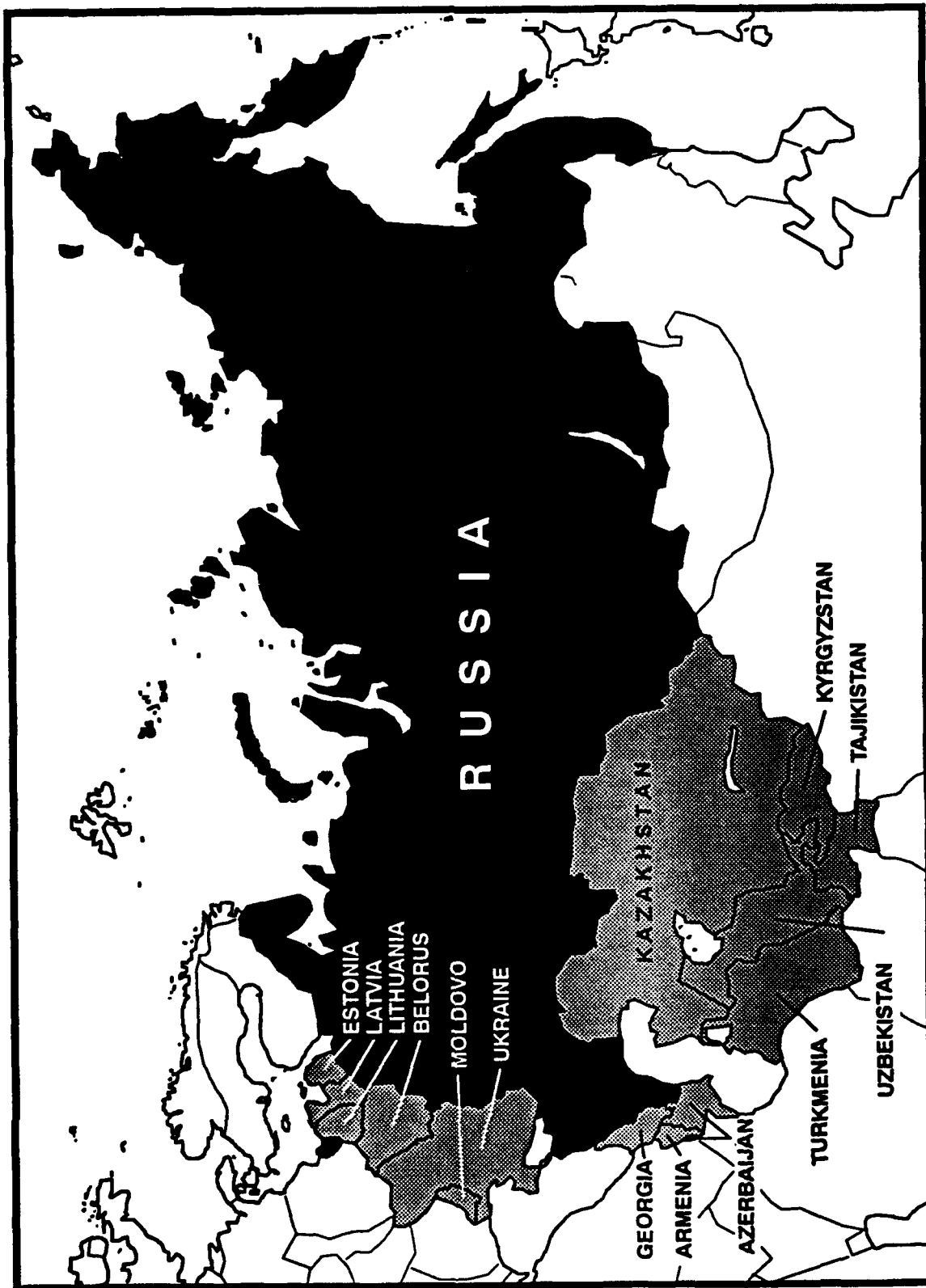
### **POLITICAL ASPECTS**

Although theoretical discussions about the armed forces in the year 2000 were necessary, there were some very practical problems that needed immediate attention. The disintegration of the Soviet Union created a foreign basing

problem for the new Russian government. The independent republics established their own forces and troops, who were not willing to give their allegiance to the new state where they were located, had to leave. The officer corps, comprised mostly of ethnic Russians, was particularly affected by the new borders of their state. Former Soviet equipment, including nuclear warheads, became the property of the new republics. In addition, the Russians lost military bases with all the supporting infrastructure. The Baltic states of Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia, exerted even more pressure on Russia to withdraw the Northwest Group of Forces. The military needed a new sense of direction and a cohesive factor to provide purpose to a force whose only mission had become obscured by its withdrawal from foreign territory and its reduction in size.

Speaking at the General Staff Military Academy's Military Science Conference in May 1992, Defense Minister Grachev remarked that it is very important to "eliminate the existing gap between the present make-up and structure of the Armed Forces and the real requirements of the Russian Federation" . Speaking at the same conference , Colonel-General I. N. Rodionov emphasized the necessity of defining Russia's vital interests in order to generate, and deploy, the forces properly. Although Russia's position in Eurasia suggests that Russia's vital interests are global in scope, Rodionov noted that there is no inherent enemy and that the greatest

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danger to Russia lies in ethnic tension, intra-territorial border disputes, and unresolved religious differences. Accepting these political aspects in doctrine forces a re-examination of the military-technical aspects. If the notion that inevitable conflict with foreign enemies drove the military-technical aspect of doctrine for the development and deployment of nuclear weapons, the new situation focuses on conflict within her borders. This requires the conduct of low-level conflict, and the use of conventional weapons, which will drive changes in force structure and equipment development.

#### **MILITARY-TECHNICAL ASPECT**

Major General Yu A. Nikolayev, chief of a scientific research institute, suggested that the necessary redirection in military-technical policy should consist of a four part program: First, armament systems need to be developed and produced which consider the ability of Russia's economy to manufacture, and maintain, them. Second, weapons technology cannot fall behind other nations who might pose a threat to Russia in future conflicts. Third, the equipment removed from the inventory of the armed forces as a result of treaty requirements, should be recycled for a profit. Fourth, conversion of military plants to commercial enterprises should

maintain the necessary capability of quality production.<sup>2</sup>

Nikolayev's contention is that, in spite of a no-first use policy regarding the deployment of nuclear weapons, Russia should retain a nuclear capability as a deterrent to possible nuclear aggression. In addition, he sees that the reduced spending policy on the military, initiated under Gorbachev and continued with Yeltsin, will probably result in an unbalanced distribution of weapons among the services. To make this worse, several weapons factories have either completely stopped production, or are only filling back orders.<sup>3</sup> Thus, from a military-technical standpoint, Russia will have a serious acquisition problem in the future, if she should need to rearm on short notice.

Conversion of defense enterprises to consumer manufacturing has not achieved great success. The hope that consumer goods could be exported for desperately needed hard currency, needed to support industrial development, has not materialized. In addition, Russia was hoping to attract foreign investment. Unfortunately, military factories do not have knowledge of marketing techniques necessary to promote commercial products. Ideas, such as floating hotels and tour submarines, have not worked. The Russian enterprises lack focus, a target market and western partners to provide investment capital.<sup>4</sup> A factory which used to make instruments for missiles was unsuccessful in finding a joint venture partner which would enable the plant to produce micro-chips,



cable TV components, auto diagnostic systems and non-ferrous refrigeration.<sup>5</sup> Another former defense plant wanted to market telephones, medical equipment, kitchen utensils, furniture and children's toys. The Navy, which had largely been left to fend for itself, is trying to establish commercial centers for the sale of military hardware in order to obtain funds to construct housing for officers and their families, in addition to purchasing foodstuffs for service personnel.<sup>6</sup> One area in which the Navy may, in fact, be able to achieve some success is in ship repair and ship building. As a result of a severe cut back in funds, there is excess building and dry-dock capacity, but the challenge will be to market Russian expertise to hard currency customers. If this can be done, and there is a resurgence in military ship orders, the switch to defence production could be accomplished with greater ease than in factories that produce goods for which there is no military application.

#### **THREAT AND DANGER**

Doctrine is a road map showing the direction in which the current leadership envisions the military heading. At this moment in Russian history, military doctrine is not only a tool to accommodate the evolution of the force, but a guidepost for transition. Within the context of that transition, Russia has re-examined its perception of the

threat environment. Lieutenant General N. P. Kolotkov, Chief of the Strategy Faculty of the Military Academy of the General Staff, believes that there are two classifications of threat: military danger and military threat. In 1989, the General Staff Academy arrived at a consensus in defining these terms. A 'military danger' exists when the initiation of hostilities is equal to their prevention. A 'military threat' exists when the probability of war exceeds its containment.<sup>7</sup> Both terms are used in reference to interstate, interbloc, and inter-ethnic situations, implying that Russia, or at least its military leaders in the General Staff, acknowledge that there is potential armed conflict both beyond and within Russia's borders.

The May 1992 draft doctrine further defines 'military danger' and 'military threat'. Danger can be either potential or immediate. A potential danger exists if hostile intentions, should they arise, can be supported by military capabilities, but they are not directed specifically against any state. A military threat exists when the ability to successfully wage war accrues to one side, who not only has the intent, but also the capability to be victorious.<sup>8</sup> Immediate danger is the pre-war phase in threat perception. The current position of the doctrine is that Russia does not face a military threat, but the danger of war still exists and therefore, the state needs to arm, train, and man accordingly.

To be more precise in explaining military danger, the

doctrine outlines six areas which concern Russian security. Briefly, these are the dominating aspirations of other nations or coalitions, foreign bases near the Russian border, political or economic blackmail, instability, actions against the Russian Diaspora<sup>9</sup> and proliferation and terrorism.<sup>10</sup> Civilian leaders and the Russian General Staff officers continue to debate these points, although the realities of the current international situation mitigate against moving concerns from the category of a military danger to that of a military threat.

The first potential danger area defined in the doctrine, dominating aspirations of states and coalitions, can be discounted for the present time. Various treaties, signed by the United States and Russia, form the framework for an environment in which it is unlikely that a coalition of states will form to impose its will on Russia with military force. This does not discount the possibility that a future non-nuclear power may challenge Russia. Andrey Kokoshin, First Deputy Minister of Defense, pointed out in an article for Nezavisimaya Gazeta, that there are instances when a 'limited' nuclear strike might be used. For example, Russia would consider an attack on a nuclear power plant, a key strategic element in the national infrastructure, as a 'first' nuclear strike. Such an action would justify a limited nuclear response under the guidelines of the current draft doctrine.<sup>11</sup> The CFE Treaty, Start I, Start II and a forthcoming chemical

weapons agreement are all reducing the inventory of weapons and equipment for both NATO and Russia. Domestic political constraints on the nations of Western Europe are another factor. The economic problems facing the Common Market, such as high unemployment, lack of agreement on a common agricultural policy and stagnant industrial growth, will prevent NATO from diverting precious resources to the maintenance of an armed forces which could pose an offensive threat to Russia.

Although Belarus, Ukraine and Kazakstan now have their own nuclear weapons following the nationalization of weapons after the collapse of the Soviet Union, these countries have no immediate reason, and do not demonstrate an intent, to take offensive action against Russia. These arsenals may be a sufficient deterrent against Russian aggression, but none of the countries has an arsenal which can deliver an effective attack against vital Russian industries and infrastructure. China has the potential to threaten Russia with the number of men she can put under arms. However, given the modernization program in China, there is little reason for her to turn to Russia as a target. In addition, Russia and China plan to create a 200 kilometer 'zone of stability' in order to reduce tension along their borders. Each side will withdraw troops to 100 kilometers from the border. According to Defense Minister Grachev, the main Chinese forces are presently more than 400 kilometers from the Russia border, and this agreement

will not hamper the Russian doctrinal objective of defending the borders. In addition, border conditions are such that the troops would gladly leave.<sup>12</sup>

The doctrine defines foreign basing of troops near the Russian border as a second potential danger that could lead to escalation into armed conflict. It is unlikely that any of the former Soviet republics will become host nations to foreign armies. The Baltic Republics of Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia are seeking a rapid withdrawal of Russian troops and want the military bases for their own armed forces. These forces, however, are not yet fully established in most cases. The virtual collapse of the Russian Navy has not caused the United States to increase its naval presence near Russian waters and presents no cause for the Russians to take offensive measures against a threat at sea.

The debate continues over the extent to which the armed forces will be used to protect the diaspora. Russians in the Baltic states form the largest minority group, however, world opinion would interpret any attempt by Russia to protect these citizens with military force as foreign intervention. There is already considerable discontent with the malingering Northwest Group of Forces, who have twice delayed their departure. Military action not related to the withdrawal would not be prudent for Russia at this time. The interest on the part of the Russian government should be the protection of human rights for Russians abroad. Other hot spots exist in

Moldova, Georgia and Turkmenia. Russian intervention on behalf of Russian citizens in these sovereign nations has not been well received. Even within the military there is disagreement on this point in the doctrine. Some view this as a political problem with deep roots in history. In Estonia, for example, the 40% of the population that is not ethnic Estonian is comprised of different minorities. Although the Russians are the largest component of this group, there are other minorities in Estonia. Georgia has a 20% Russian minority, but there are other large minority groups, including the Armenians and Greeks who have a long tradition of inter-ethnic rivalry. A similiar situation exists in Tadjikistan. In all these areas there is a tremendous potential for a local dispute to escalate into a major regional conflict if the military is called to do a task which is best solved through political or diplomatic channels.<sup>13</sup> The debate on the diaspora should continue in earnest before the doctrine assumes the force of law. Considering that Russia does not see any particular state as her enemy, it would not be logical for Russia to engage in an armed conflict at a time when doctrine suggests that the country rejects the Clausewitzian notion that war is an extension of politics.

#### **OPERATIONAL LEVELS OF CONFLICT**

The operations of the armed forces, as outlined in the

draft doctrine, can be divided into five general categories: 1) internal security and domestic disturbances, 2) peace-keeping, 3) local/regional war, 4) large scale conventional war and 5) nuclear war.<sup>14</sup> In theory, these five levels of operations also outline an escalation process leading to nuclear confrontation. If conflict can be resolved at any level, the use of nuclear weapons can be avoided. Changing strategic concepts have been adopted in order to support these operations. In addition to halting aggression and defensive sufficiency, omni-directional defense has conceptually been adopted as a means to employ the forces, regardless of the level of conflict.

Omni-directional defense is a move away from the concept of military districts and theater defensive areas. Instead, forces could be grouped according to the threat. There is a debate concerning the composition of the force and even the need to consider all around defense. Valentin Lorionov advances the argument that Russia is both a European and Asian power and subject to east-west conflict. Because of this, he advocates a three branch armed force. The first would be a strong strategic rocket force as a deterrent against war. A second branch of service would combine air defense, the air force and the navy. The third branch would be a mobile force which could deploy rapidly and would consist mostly of airborne assault troops and marines.<sup>15</sup> This concept gives little flexibility in fighting a conventional war on Russian

territory and is in direct opposition to the doctrinal position that Russia has no inherent external enemies.

Lev Semeyko, supported by Grachev, presented a counter-argument to the east-west defense. The essence of the counter-argument is that, because the Soviet Union has disintegrated, Russia now has north-south security threats in addition to potential east-west threats. However, the nature of the threat has changed. Security is threatened by the potential of domestic or border disputes to escalate into regional conflict. Such a conflict is mostly likely to be conventional and long-term in nature. In this case, proper groupings of strategic nuclear weapons are important, but consideration must also be given to ground force deployment.

Semeyko supports having a small branch of service called a rapid deployment force. It would be composed of airborne assault and light infantry divisions, marine expeditionary units and special operations command units.<sup>16</sup> These units would require sealift, airlift and amphibious reinforcements. Rapid deployment units would be most effective, given current capabilities, when deployed within Russia proper. Grachev goes even further and argues that there should be three to five strategic formations. Based in different parts of Russia, these units would be stationed according to present political realities and treaty commitments. The main elements would be covering forces, mobile forces and a high command reserve with emphasis placed on mobility.<sup>17</sup> Omni-directional



defense would be enhanced as forces theoretically could be deployed anywhere quickly. This is in contrast to the old notion of defense requiring large standing forces with heavy equipment to be prepositioned in areas that were perceived to threaten the nation's vital interests.

Peace-keeping operations are not only a step between internal security and regional war, they represent a new doctrinal mission. Peace-keeping forces are in Yugoslavia under a United Nations mandate. As is the case with nuclear weapons, participating in peace-keeping operations gives Russia an international status it might not otherwise hold. In spite of the current difficulties, Russia still considers herself to be a super-power and believes that participation in United Nations operations can further her standing in the international arena.<sup>18</sup> Peace-keeping units should be simple to assemble and deploy because armaments and fighting vehicles are not required. One might assume that ground transport vehicles comprise the main piece of equipment and servicemen would be armed lightly. A major obstacle to further deployment of peace-keeping forces outside Russia is cost. It is expensive to deploy and maintain troops abroad, even though they are not engaged in combat operations. Although Russia is willing to support future operations approved by the Security Council of the United Nations, financial support is desired.<sup>19</sup>

Local and regional conflict, large scale conventional war

and nuclear war are all possible uses of the armed forces. Given the current world situation, however, it is unlikely that Russia will be involved in armed conflict at this level for the foreseeable future. This period of relative stability will give Russia the time and opportunity to restructure the armed forces as it withdraws from foreign countries and reduces in size.

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3. Personal interview with LTC Larry Bockman, former U.S. Marine Attache to Russia, 25 January 1993.

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## CHAPTER V

### FORCE STRUCTURE AND CAPABILITIES

Russia's change in posture to 'defensive sufficiency' does not require a standing force of four million with 150 ground divisions globally deployed, a blue water navy circumnavigating the earth, a rocket force and an air force that can hit targets anywhere in the world. However, it does require a standing army of some sort and a coastal defense force. Russia also needs air defense forces to secure the air space and to avert a missile attack. The Russians make the argument that some nuclear warheads are necessary as a deterrent force. How much is enough? What kind of force structure is best? These age-old questions are the focus of the new doctrine.

Major-General V.I. Chepurnoy, a directorate chief at the General Staff Center for Operational and Strategic Studies, states that three factors constrain the formulation of a new force structure. First, if the standard of living for the Russian people is not denigrated further, military expenditure should not exceed 6% of the Gross National Product. It must be even less if Russia's GNP does not increase by 3% a year. Chepurnoy acknowledges that military spending is officially reported at between 8 to 20% of GNP. In reality, it is closer

to 45%, if one applies western methods of accounting to the Russian budget.<sup>1</sup> Second, the number of personnel in uniform should not exceed 1% of the population. This size force would not represent the capacity of the armed forces infrastructure, but in theory could be supported by a budget that consumed 6 - 7% of the GNP. Third, treaty obligations will reduce the amount of equipment that Russia is allowed to retain in the weapons inventory. A reduction of weapons infers a reduction in manpower. Consequently, Chepurnoy suggests that the armed forces draw down from the current 2.8 million to approximately 1.5 million by the year 2000.<sup>2</sup> Force structure would gradually evolve resulting in the eventual elimination of some branches and the changing of roles for others.

#### **STRATEGIC ROCKET FORCES**

In spite of the START I and II Treaties, Strategic Rocket Forces will play an important role in the defense of Russia for the foreseeable future. Lieutenant-General L. I. Volkov, Chief of a 'scientific research institute', claims that some nuclear capability is necessary to act as a deterrent against potential political blackmail from other nations with nuclear weapons. He openly supports Gorbachev's 1991 proposals for a unilateral reduction in strategic nuclear weapons to 5,000 warheads, reducing the number to 4,500 warheads by the year 2000.<sup>3</sup> Volkov maintains that the Strategic Rocket Force is

still the most important branch of the new armed forces and should not be reduced further by treaty. Further, he warns that without more scientists to improve the rocket capabilities, Russia will quickly lose the deterrent advantage of her missile force. He stresses that the deterrence aspect of the new doctrine cannot be maintained if the military-technical capability continues to be ignored. The percentage of scientists involved in military technical research has declined from 6% in 1985 to 1.5% in 1992. From a Russian perspective, this growing weakness will eventually reduce the effectiveness of the Strategic Rocket Forces.

In an interview with Komsomolskaya Pravda, a mere six months after his appearance at the General Staff Military Science Academy lectures, Volkov was not optimistic regarding the future of the Strategic Rocket Force. He admitted that missiles were being cut up for scrap and that troop numbers were being systematically reduced. He suggests that there is an increasing probability that a challenge to Russia might come from a medium or smaller non-nuclear state. 'Specific' targets still remain, however, given the potential challenge, the United States is no longer on the target list. In accordance with the draft doctrine, Russia will employ a 'limited' nuclear strike, if necessary. This response would be appropriate if a nuclear power plant or other strategic target were attacked, even if conventional weapons did the damage.<sup>4</sup> Nuclear missile forces are a guarantee of strategic

independence for Russia, but they have no utility in suppressing domestic disturbances. To make matters worse, the Strategic Rocket Force has no clear mission. The missiles in Belarus, Kazakstan and Ukraine are technically under the command and control of Moscow, however, there are political problems arising. Volkov has indicated that he does not wish to participate in resolving political disputes over the rocket force. The manpower shortage is causing some practical readiness problems - officers are performing 30% more duty in silos and are not receiving additional compensation.<sup>5</sup> Without a doubt, the morale and readiness of the force is adversely affected. In addition, some reformers are anxious to do away with the Strategic Rocket Force as a branch of service and subordinate it to the Air Forces.<sup>6</sup>

#### **GROUND FORCES**

The Ground Forces comprise the largest branch of the service and will probably take on the most important role in the Russian Armed Forces of the future. With new missions, including the maintenance of internal security and quelling domestic disturbances, the force needs restructuring. Even the role of defending territory against foreign attack does not require the current large number in the standing army. In addition, future equipment and force structure must emphasize force mobility. One can infer an example of this from the

data that Russia released under the Treaty on Conventional Forces in Europe. Russia is redistributing her troops as she withdraws from Germany, and other foreign bases, in combination with the redefinition of the Russian border. Helicopter units are moving into the area along the western and southwestern border of Russia. There are no garrisons for the ground troops in these areas and it is too expensive to build bases where no infrastructure exists. This forces combat ground troops to locate away from the border, to areas where garrisons already exist. The depots, maintenance areas and logistics bases needed to supply the ground forces are located even further into the Russian heartland.<sup>7</sup>

Total personnel in the Ground Forces will probably drop to 1.5 million by the end of 1993 and possibly as low as 600,000 by the time all personnel reductions have occurred.<sup>8</sup> Some reduction will come from attrition. The abysmal showing of new recruits during the semi-annual call-up will also account for lower than expected numbers. Colonel-General F. M. Kuzmin, chief of the Frunze Military Academy, asserts that Russia must concentrate on the development of command and control and reconnaissance equipment.<sup>9</sup> In addition, he believes that greater emphasis must be put on airborne and airmobile forces, not only for their training, but also in maintaining their peacetime manning levels as close as possible to wartime deployment requirements.

Kuzmin further argues that a shift from a front-army



structure to a corps-brigade structure will make it easier to control the army and to adapt to different missions. Kuzmin envisions the airborne forces as providing the core of a rapid-deployable mobile reserve maintained in a constant state of readiness. In order for this concept to be effective, it requires the pre-positioning of heavy equipment. Current military thinking envisions the ground forces deployed in 3 to 5 strategic groupings, corresponding to the potential threat areas.<sup>10</sup> In general terms, Russia accepts the need to defend to the West, South and East with ground troops. Each strategic group would be supported by reserves and mobilization formations which train and deploy units to bring active forces to full-strength. Mass rearming is not as important as insuring that the forces have sufficient modern equipment for training.

#### **NAVAL FORCES**

Although the Russian Navy has not been required by treaty to reduce in size, it is in fact becoming a smaller force. An analyst from the Department of Defense remarked that the Russian Navy is a 'coastal defense force with nuclear submarines.' This may not be an exaggeration. The navy has received reduced funding for both building and maintaining ships as well as by the costs involved in operating a blue-water fleet. Rear Admiral Pauk, chief of the Main Naval Staff

Center for Operational-Tactical Studies, cautions that the navy still needs to be prepared to defend Russia and 'catagorically disagrees with the opinion... that Russia cannot have fleets, but flotillas of mixed forces on the Baltic and Black Sea.'<sup>11</sup> Pauk envisions the navy as a major player in maintaining 'global stability', even if it is only under the auspices of a United Nations mission. He does acknowledge that a large fleet is costly and, in the current economic environment, unfeasible. In terms of budgetary allocations, the reality of the situation is that the Navy has always been the least favored service. It will not play a predominant role in the future and will have no ability to project power. Overseas, it is currently limited to ports in Cuba, Syria and to CamRahn Bay, Vietnam.<sup>12</sup>

The doctrine delineates a more modest role for the Navy in defending the state's maritime economic zone, combating terrorism and patrolling against smuggling. There is an opportunity for the navy to play an active role in border protection, although, the service is behind in recruiting of an all-volunteer force and it has few combatants at sea. One carrier fleet in the North Sea and many smaller ships, suitable for the mission of anti-smuggling and anti-piracy raids, have been decommissioned.<sup>13</sup> According to Pacific Fleet Commander Admiral Gennadiy Khvatov, in 1992 his fleet was reduced by 70 naval craft, including the decommissioning of several atomic submarines.<sup>14</sup> In effect, patrolling of the

Russian Pacific coast ceased and the effort placed on anti-smuggling and piracy operations will be focused in the European part of the country.

Unlike other services, where troop basing is a clear cut issue, subordination of the naval forces is a topic of debate. The Ukraine has attempted to form its own navy by subordinating the Black Sea Fleet to the Ukrainian MOD.<sup>15</sup> This endeavor failed and the force is now under joint Russian-Ukraine control. Captain First Rank Nikolay Kostrov, first deputy commander of the Ukrainian Navy, believes that the Agreement on the Status of the Transitional Period will come to fruition. Under this accord, the Navy of the Ukraine will be formed by the end of 1995. Theoretically, there will be three phases in the development of the Ukrainian Navy and the Russian Federal Navy: 1) create a joint command element in the Black Sea Fleet, 2) form and develop the Ukrainian and Russian Federal Navy and 3) develop command and control missions for each navy.<sup>16</sup> Over the span of two years, joint command, control and manning issues will be resolved. Flagging of the fleet is an unresolved issue, however ships will use the flag of their port of registry as a temporary measure. Until a final agreement is concluded on basing rights, Ukraine will allow Russia port access and material support.

Admiral Nikolai N. Amelko, Vice Chairman of the Peace to the Oceans Committee, offers a different perspective. He argues in favor of a single fleet because of its great

expense. Individual republics cannot realistically expect to acquire sufficient funds to build, maintain, man and equip their own fleets. The Russian allocation of funds to the Navy has already been reduced by 30 to 40% removing many ships from the inventory.<sup>17</sup> Regardless of the problems facing the administration of Naval Forces, the republics are exerting their rights vis-a-vis basing privileges. The Baltic states were adamant about reclaiming their ports and forcing the relocation of two dozen submarines and battleships from Leipaja, Latvia, to Kronstadt (St. Petersburg) in 1992.<sup>18</sup>

#### **AIR FORCES**

Colonel-General of Aviation B.F. Korolkov, Chief of the Air Academy in the Name of Yuri Gagarin, believes there is a realistic structure for the Air Forces as it departs the forward area and becomes a home-based force. He acknowledges the limitations the economy places on the air force, but envisions a role in local wars, conventional global war and nuclear conflict. The operational area of the air force could be anywhere: the continental, an ocean theater of operations, or in space. In accordance with the doctrinal principles of deterring aggression and supporting peace-keeping missions, Korolkov proposes four divisions within the Air Force - long range aviation, frontal aviation, military transport, and reserve and training units.<sup>19</sup>

Regardless of the actual structure, Korolkov argues that the Air Forces must be prepared to achieve air superiority over opposing forces, move operations between theaters, maintain sufficient reserves to replace and refuel aircraft during conflict and conduct joint and independent air operations.<sup>20</sup> In spite of reorganization and the desires of the service chief to maintain a large inventory of aircraft, the Treaty on Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) limits the basing and numbers of air-to-air and air-to-ground combat aircraft west of the Urals.<sup>21</sup> Despite this, military lift capability can be maintained as transport aircraft are used in the commercial sector of the economy. Former Air Force pilots are allegedly forming their own air cargo companies with decommissioned military aircraft, but are available for military service should the need arise. This could be the basis of an air reserve with the capacity to transport troops and their equipment to areas of conflict.<sup>22</sup>

#### **AIR DEFENSE**

Air defense policy plays an important role in the protection of Russian forces from air attacks by foreign aggressors. Major-General A.S. Sumin, chief of a 'scientific research institute' asserts that air defense is increasing in importance as a nuclear deterrent. Further, the force must insure 'air superiority, create conditions favorable for

strategic deployment, deny the escalation of conflict.'<sup>23</sup> To fulfill the requirements of this mission the following systems will need to be supported: unified reconnaissance and areospace attack warning, command and control, missile space defense and areospace defense.<sup>24</sup> Of all the structures and missions under the new doctrine, Sumin perhaps offers the most realistic assessment. Russia, he says, cannot afford the desired multiple air defense armies and a missile attack army subordinate to each air defense district. He suggests completely doing away with the Air Defense Forces as a branch of service and subordinating its units to the Air Force or Strategic Rocket Forces.<sup>25</sup>

#### **MANPOWER**

Changes in force structure can only be successful if they are accompanied with the appropriate level of manning. The goal is to have 1.5 million in the armed forces by the end of the century, however some feel the services can be adequately manned with as few as 600,000 professional volunteers under contract. Regardless of the eventual number of individuals wearing uniform to defend Russia's vital interests, there are some severe manpower problems facing the nation today.

In July 1992 the shortfall in the draft was providing serious problems for the Strategic Rocket Forces. Major General Putinin, Chief of the Strategic Missile Forces

Directorate, has openly said that many regions fell short of their requirement to supply troops to the Strategic Rocket Force during the spring draft call-up. As a result only 60% of the required force reported for duty.<sup>26</sup> The draft call in the fall of 1992 was not any more successful than in the spring, even though the Russian Law on Defense was signed by Yeltsin on 24 September 1992. Less than half of the required conscripts from Moscow were brought into active service. Lieutenant General Vitaliy Bologov, Chief of the General Staff Main Directorate for Organization and Mobilization, has observed that only one third of the conscripts who do report for the draft actually become soldiers.<sup>27</sup> The problems in the Navy were compounded by a change in the length of service requirements. Terms of conscription were reduced from three to two years, resulting in the simultaneous discharge of both groups in December 1992.

Failure to enforce the draft is but one reason for the shortage of new recruits. Exemptions from military service appear to be easier to acquire. Prestige has disappeared from military service, and when an enlistment is up, there is no longer a guarantee that an individual can return to his place of work.<sup>28</sup> The educational level of recruits has sharply declined to a point where 17% have not completed secondary education and virtually no one has education beyond high school.<sup>29</sup> Approximately 10% have health problems which disqualify them from active service and another 2% have

criminal records which precludes military service.<sup>30</sup> To make up for the shortfall in manpower, officers are being tasked with guard duty and other menial chores.

Contract service, which the Russians hope will eventually fill 50% of the enlisted force, is both too expensive and under-subscribed, making it an inefficient tool to make up for the lack of conscripts. A ten-fold increase in pay over current levels and an opportunity to acquire free housing after eight years of service, succeeded in enticing only 30,000 of the anticipated 100,000 contract volunteers in November 1992.<sup>31</sup> Officers continue to make up the shortage for the time being, but this will be only another factor adding to the already low morale of the officer corps, that decreases overall readiness.

## **READINESS**

In addition to manpower, several factors are presently impeding the readiness of the Russian forces. There are problems with training, morale and garrison availability. International politics and economics are also issues for the Russian armed forces, since they must comply with the restrictions placed upon Russian forces by other nations and the military must make hard choices on how to allocate its decreasing funding.

Training for Russian forces still remaining in Germany is



all but non-existent. The bi-lateral agreement which governs the conditions for Russian withdrawal regulates Russian ground and air training so strictly that only small arms fire within garrisons can be accomplished without ample prior notice and approval of the German government. If pressed, Russian forces could defend their garrisons, but they would be unable to sustain themselves in any long term conflict. A similar situation exists in the Baltic states. Although Russian forces are subject to harassment and verbal abuse from the local population, the reality is that no military threat exists to the units deployed outside the country.

Dislocation of troops within Russia has also an impact on readiness. In 1992 alone, 15 divisions, 23 brigades, 36 air regiments and about 100,000 service members were forced to relocate.<sup>32</sup> Some of these forces will form the corps of the peace-keeping forces. Although materiel and weapons have been inventoried, retraining, restructuring and relocating in preparation for peace-keeping operations had yet to be accomplished by the end of October 1992.<sup>33</sup>

The proficiency of pilots is in doubt. As early as 1990, overflight restrictions and reduction in funding for fuel and maintenance had reduced flying time. In 1992, pilots were logging in only 15-20 hours of flight training for the year. Although, they received a satisfactory readiness rating, this was only 10% of the normal flight hours during the previous decade.<sup>34</sup> In spite of their rating, it is doubtful that these

pilots could remain proficient. In addition, the air force obtained only 70% of its fuel requirements during the year.

During the past year, the only major exercise of the Russian forces, "Defense '92", was conducted in October. It was primarily an air defense exercise operated under the leadership of Andrei Kokoshin, First Deputy Minister. This live fire exercise was designed to test various electronic-counter measure systems and their contribution toward air supremacy in a rapidly changing combat environment. Illustrating the new environment, the Ministry of Defense invited representative from defense industries to observe the exercise and evaluate the equipment.<sup>35</sup> Overall, "Defense '92" appears to have been an effort to enhance the military-technical capability of the armed forces as required by the draft doctrine.

In order for forces to be combat capable they must be able to train for battle. Realistic training requires fuel, ammunition, equipment and a training area. At the present time, the Russian armed forces face a shortage of all the requirements necessary to maintain readiness. Given the limitations, good order and discipline must be maintained to prevent chaos and boost morale in the absense of a concrete mission.

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## CONCLUSIONS

For the Russians, doctrine is forward looking and historically has had its origin with the political leadership of the country. Although the West abhorred the Soviet Union's communist regime, it did provide the Soviet Union with a stable government. The civilian leadership had the backing of the military. While service branch chiefs debated the fine points of doctrine, such as refining force structure, the military did not have any outright disagreement with the civilian leadership. The Soviet government allocated sufficient civilian economic resources to support military missions.

Today, the current draft doctrine also has its origins with the civilian leadership of Russia. However, the stability of the Yeltsin government is much less certain than that of the former Soviet Union. In contrast to the previous situation, the current debate on the new missions and functions of the branches of the armed forces, as well as the reform of the military, illustrates that there are two distinct groups in the senior military leadership of Russia.

One group accepts the general defensive nature of the likely missions of the armed forces and acknowledges that, currently, there is no inherent external threat to Russian security. It agrees that Russia must concentrate on economic

growth in the consumer sector to maintain domestic stability. On the other hand, the second group believes that the military should be vigilant of a resurgent foreign threat and military requirements should be the driving force in the economy. This conservative group is more hard-line in its thinking and does not appear to accept the decline in Russian military prestige both at home and abroad.

The division presents a serious problem for the Russian armed forces. While the problem has many dimensions, one can clearly see its effects in the area of doctrine. In a worst-case situation, this division could cause "grid-lock" in Russian military planning. If the branch leadership does not restructure their forces within the limits of manpower, equipment and funding, they will be unable to accomplish any mission, regardless of their predisposition to use military force in an offensive manner. The only way for the military to obtain everything it needs in this scenario would be for the military to take control of the country and direct the economy to provide manpower and equipment. An unstable and volatile environment would result because the civilian population is unlikely to support military rule. In order to prevent this, the civilian leadership must be able to control the military. If we are to accept the doctrine as a guide to Russia's military planning, we must be careful to observe that the government is successful in controlling the ultra-conservative elements in the military. The ultimate adoption



of the new doctrine, therefore, depends on the stability of the government, because there is a division in military thinking.

The new doctrine raises a major question for the West: Is Russia serious about the defensive posture or is it a means to distract western attention while Russia reorganizes its forces for offensive action? The answer is yes, the Russians are serious and no, the military is not reorganizing for a new offense. At the heart of the draft doctrine is a redefining of Russia's vital interests and security issues. Instead of maintaining an adversarial relationship with other nations, Russia's future external security can best be achieved through a series of multi-lateral or bi-lateral treaties with other countries. Internal security for Russia is now linked to positive economic growth, to the development of high-technology weapons and to the improvement in the standard of living. Yet behind this, stability of the present government is paramount to pursue this course of action.

Within Russia, there appears to be no argument that the size of the force must be reduced. The disintegration of the Soviet Union created new homelands for approximately 100 million former Soviet citizens, leaving Russia with a population of 150 million. The doctrine calls for an armed force not to exceed 1% of the total population. Although an armed force of 1.5 million is achievable, it probably overstates the eventual size of the armed forces. The plan to

go to an all volunteer force of 100,000 is a very expensive, and undersubscribed, option at this time. It is not likely that Russia will be able to develop a force manned solely by volunteers, which would form a professional corps of service members with longevity. The nation will still have to rely on conscripts until sufficient funds are budgeted for an all-volunteer force, even if the target goal of personnel in uniform is reduced.

Although all parts of the Russian military establishment seem to agree that they must reduce the size of the forces, there is no such agreement on the deployment of these forces. The doctrine calls for a mobile force which could be deployed anywhere in the world. Because the current main concern is internal security and border control, the force will take on the characteristics of a land force, lightly armed with sufficient lift to deploy where necessary. The prognosis for the Navy, which traditionally has been short-changed on funding, is not good. Russian borders are not threatened by naval forces of any foreign nation. It is air-lift, not sea-lift, that is the crucial element in moving forces around within the Russian borders. Russia should be able to do away with the TVD and Military district concept and reorganize to accomplish airborne and air mobile operations. There are sufficient assets remaining in the service to accomplish rapid redeployment to hostile areas within Russia and along her borders. The current economic and military situation will not

allow Russia to conduct long distance operations of any duration.

Some hard-liners are still pushing for heavy mobile reserves. They prefer to have fewer divisions that are better manned. The problem is that heavy equipment reduces mobility. Manning will continue to be a problem and Russia is probably better served by having cadre units spread throughout the country with local populations in a reserve status to fill units when they are activated.

Destruction of equipment under the Conventional Forces in Europe treaty provisions will play an important part in reorganizing the armed forces. It is in the interest of the United States that we insist that Russia comply with their treaty obligations. Destroyed equipment is lost from the inventory for good. Replacements for equipment will be difficult because many former military factories are no longer in the weapons producing business. Anticipated foreign buyers have not materialized and civilian conversion has not proceeded as planned. As the facilities fall into disrepair, their ability to retool on short notice for future weapons production is greatly diminished. The redefining of national borders has effected the availability of spare and component parts throughout the armed forces. It is unlikely that factories in the former republics will still manufacture weapons for the Russian market. If they are, the republics probably want to be paid in hard currency. In real terms,

this means that replacement and repair of current Russian military equipment will be expensive, or not accomplished, in the foreseeable future. Given these very real problems, light mobile forces make sense in the current defense plan for Russia.

The draft doctrine calls for participation in peace-keeping activities. Russia has participated in such actions, however, it is in the United States' interests to be selective regarding the areas in which we agree to Russian assistance in United Nations sanctioned operations. The experience of the Russian peace-keeping battalion in the former Yugoslavia has been expensive for the Russian government. Neither the United States nor the United Nations should be required to pay for Russian participation in such operations, a point of disagreement with some in the Russian government. Russia should not be given an opportunity to get 'a foot in the door' in areas where vital US interests are concerned. A benign presence under United Nations sanctions could be converted to a permanent Russian presence in the form of a 'military advisory group'. Although the draft doctrine calls for no forward basing of troops, it does not address the issue of military advisors. Like the use of Russian troops in UN operations where vital US interests are involved, establishing Russian military advisory groups leads to the potential of weapons 'sales' to Third World nations. Neither situation enhances stability.

The problem of nuclear weapons remains. The doctrine does not dismiss the use of nuclear weapons in defense of the nation. In fact, the doctrine reduces the threshold for the deployment of nuclear weapons to situations where the threat of an attack on the national infrastructure becomes a reason to respond with nuclear weapons. The question is, who is the probable perpetrator of such an action. Russia must surely realize that the likely candidates are either terrorist organizations who have been able to procure nuclear weapons through the black market, or lesser nuclear powers. In either case, the doctrine call for a less stable nuclear situation.

The draft doctrine represents a transitional phase for the military. It reflects the current political and economic transition the country is experiencing as it leaves communism in the dust and attempts to incorporate 'democracy' into the pulse of the country. In order to promote progress, Russia has no choice other than to recognize the reality of her new political environment. The United States must also realize that Russia is in a transition period and it must decide how Russia fits into our current concept of national security and vital interests. Russia must maintain order in the armed forces as it reduces and reorganizes, if it is to be effective in any of the draft doctrine's prescribed missions.

Currently, Russia has sufficient manpower and equipment to conduct the basic operations outlined in the doctrine, but the plan could be upset by a change in the present leadership or a

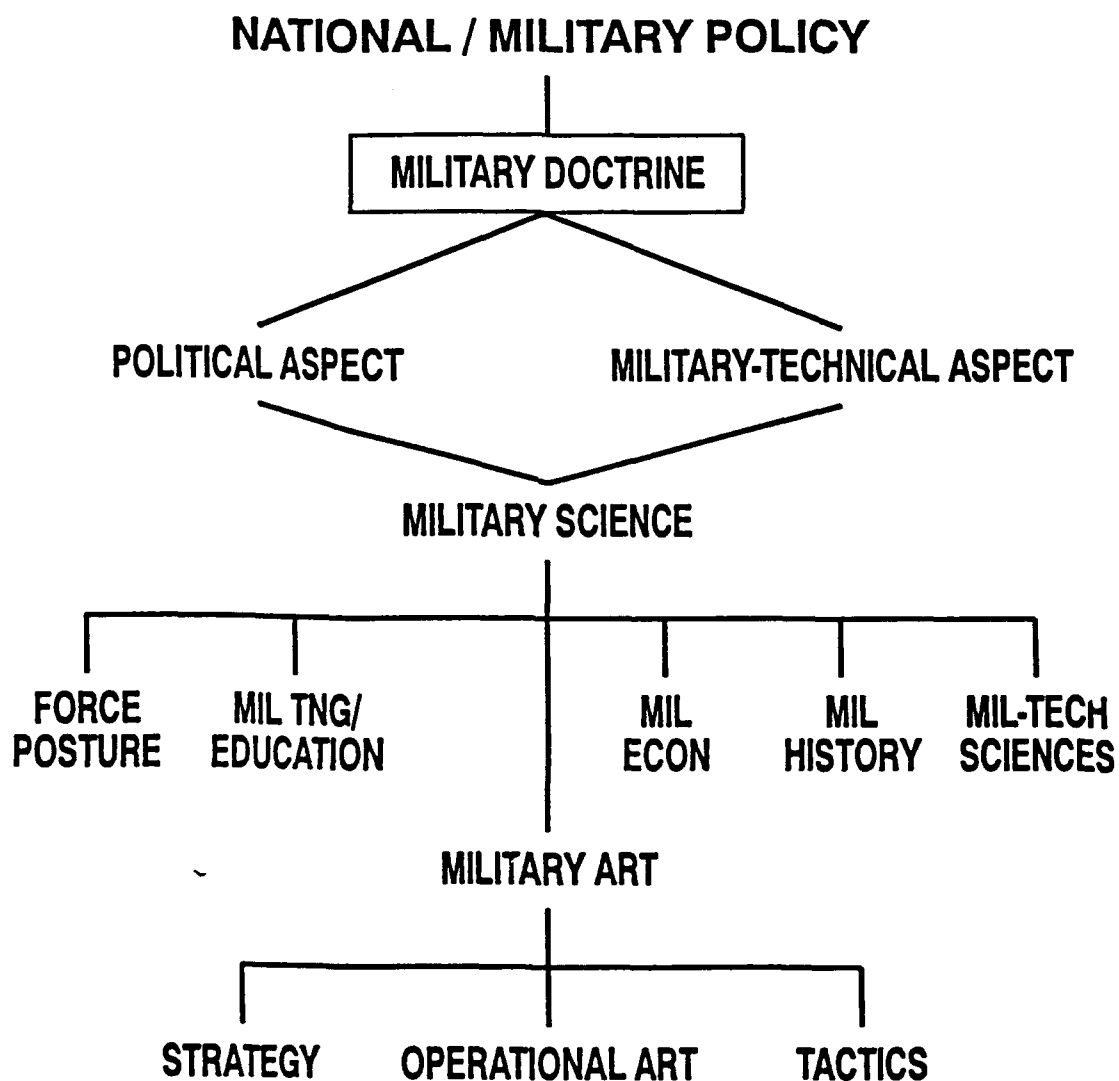
protracted civil war. The United States should realize that stability is the key factor for Russia's success. Chaos resulting from Russia's failure to maintain stability is a potential danger to the United States.

## APPENDIX I

### DEFINING DOCTRINE TERMINOLOGY

An analysis of military doctrine requires an understanding of the meaning of certain important concepts from a Russian perspective. Doctrine occupies a specific location within the hierarchical framework of Russian military thought. In the west, terms such as military doctrine, military science, military art and strategy frequently have generalized definitions and are used interchangeably. For example, the use of the term 'military doctrine' in the United States is not the result of an officially sanctioned government policy. Its use may depend on factors such as situation, service or function (i.e. unconventional warfare doctrine, air-land battle doctrine, air-defense doctrine, etc.).<sup>1</sup> However, to the Russian officer, and his Soviet predecessor, 'military doctrine' has a precise and unique definition which exists within an orderly framework of military thought. (This is true for other terms such as military science, military art and strategy.) A firm comprehension of the structure of Russian military thinking will assist the western observer in examining evolving Russian military doctrine and gauging its applicability in deciding the future capabilities associated with the use of force.

# **A FRAMEWORK FOR MILITARY DOCTRINE THE RUSSIAN CONCEPT**





As illustrated in figure 1, doctrine lies in a specific location in the hierarchy of military thought. National Policy is the driving force at the upper end and concludes with the formation of tactics. As stated in the Soviet Military Encyclopedic Dictionary, military doctrine is ". . . a system of views accepted in the state at a given (definite) time on the essence, goals and character of possible future war, on the preparation for it of the country and the armed forces and the methods of its conduct".<sup>2</sup> In contrast to the vague concept of doctrine, the key element in this rather precise definition is that these are accepted views of the state. In Russia, as the Soviet Union, this means that once adopted by the military and political leadership, doctrine has the force of law. It is the law, then, which guides all actions undertaken by the military.<sup>3</sup> Military doctrine thus becomes an outgrowth of national political policy as it applies to the military.<sup>4</sup> To summarize the general provisions of the May 1992 draft document, military doctrine answers the following forward-looking questions:

1. Does the state accept or reject war as a means of achieving political goals?
2. Does a military danger exist? To what degree? The source?
3. What is the character, aim and task of a possible war in which a state and its armed forces will have to take part?

4. What armed forces are required for the successful conduct of war? In which direction is the development conducted?
5. What are the procedures of preparation of the country and the armed forces for possible war? What are the methods of its conduct?<sup>5</sup>

In the Russian construct, the political and military-technical aspects are the two closely inter-related component parts of military doctrine. The political side (or social-political aspects as the Soviets said) deals with matters regarding where to deploy forces in the world, the probability of the outbreak of war, the possible sources of war and how the state feels about war as a matter of policy. In contrast, the military-technical side of military doctrine addresses issues relating to the strategic nature of war, strategic planning and means of employing the armed forces. The military-technical component of doctrine also concerns itself with the structure, organization, training and equipping of the armed forces. Consistent with the primacy of national policy over military doctrine, the political aspect of military doctrine dominates the military-technical side, when a choice is necessary.<sup>6</sup>

Whereas military doctrine is an accepted "system of state views", military science is a "system of knowledge on laws, principles, means and methods for the preparation of the conduct of war".<sup>7</sup> Although the legal status of military

doctrine prevents it from being open to debate, military science is an area in which there can be disagreement and discussion. The study of this topic entails investigation into the general theory of military science, military-technical sciences, military history, economics, military training and education, force posture, and the theory of military art.<sup>8</sup>

Within the field of military science, military art is predominant. This is another area where western planners often misunderstand and misuse the Russian concept. As explained in the Soviet Military Encyclopedic Dictionary, military art is the theory and practice of preparation and conduct of military actions on land, sea and in the air. Military art includes the inter-related concepts of military strategy, operational art and tactics.<sup>9</sup> In the Russian concept, tactics and operational art are service specific (i.e. tactics of the ground forces, operational art of the navy).<sup>10</sup> Their basis is the organizational level of the employed forces. Tactics deal with formations organized at the division and below; operational art concerns front and army level operations.

Within the field of military art, the preeminent position goes to military strategy which entails the 'theory and practice of preparing the country and armed forces for war, the planning and conducting of strategic operations and general warfare.'<sup>11</sup> In contrast to operational art and

tactics, strategy is not service specific, but involves the deployment of more than one branch of service to attain strategic objectives. As Sokolovskiy is quick to note, military strategy is an area of practical activity, concerning the highest level of military and civilian leadership. Because strategy is a component of military science, it also is debatable and allows for flexibility in implementation. For the Russian military, strategy becomes the practical application of doctrine as the armed forces strives to achieve clearly defined policy goals. Strategy deals with the following specific areas of study:

- the laws of armed conflict
- conditions and character of future war
- the theoretical basis for preparing the country for war
- basis for the use of armed forces
- principle basis for civil defense
- methods to conduct armed conflict
- material and technical support of armed conflict
- basis of leadership of armed forces in general war
- strategic views of potential opponents<sup>12</sup>

The Russian framework for military doctrine and its component parts illustrates a good deal of inter-relationship and overlay between these topics, particularly between military doctrine and military strategy. The important point to remember is that military doctrine is the over-arching theoretical framework which forms the legal foundation for the

study and conduct of future Russian wars. This is not to suggest that doctrine never changes. The political and military leadership will continue to work together now, as they have in the past, to adjust doctrine's provisions when changes occur in the geostrategic landscape, in the economy, in technical advances and in domestic politics. This should provide an insight into the basis that the present military and political leadership is using in trying to develop a realistic and workable military doctrine suitable for a non-Soviet, Russian state.

#### END NOTES

1. Headquarters, Department of the Army, FM 100 - 5 Operations, (Washington, 1986), p. 22.

2. "Doktrina Voennaya" Voennii Ehntsiklopedicheskii Slovar (Moskva: Voennoye Izdatel'stvo, 1983), p. 240.

3. Major-General S. N. Kozlov, The Officer's Handbook: A Soviet View (Washington: U. S. Government Printing Office), p. 66.

4. Ibid., p. 66.

5. "Oshnovii Voennoy Doktrina Rossii", Voennaya Mysl', Spetsialnii Vipysk, 1992, p. 2 and also discussed in Harriet Fast Scott, Armed Forces of the USSR (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1981), p. 37.

6. Voennaya Mysl', p. 2 and Voennii Ehntsiklopedicheskii Slovar, p. 240.

7. Graham Hall Turbiville, ed. Voroshilov Lectures: Issues of Soviet Military Strategy (Washington, D. C.: National Defense University 1990), p. 169.

8. Scott, Armed Forces of the USSR, p. 69.
9. Voennii Ehntsiklopedicheskii Slovar, p. 240.
10. Turbiville, Voroshilov Lectures, p. 169.
11. Voennii Ehntsiklopedicheskii Slovar, p. 711.
12. V. D. Sokolovskiy, Voennaya Strategiya (Moskva: Voennoye Izdatelstvo Ministerstva Oboronii SSSR, 1963), p. 15-16.

## APPENDIX II

### DIPLOMATIC LANDSCAPE FOR RUSSIA

The following excerpts from the Foreign Ministry Draft on Russian Foreign Policy give some insight into how the civilian leadership views Russia's security interests. They are related to the geo-strategic landscape and are directly impacted by the military doctrine. The Foreign Ministry draft supports the concept that Russia has no inherent external enemies as asserted in the doctrine.

Russia's Security. The foreign policy objectives are to stop armed clashes and settle conflict in the areas contiguous to the Russian state and to prevent their spread onto Russian territory. This will be accomplished without any violation of human rights. It is important to have unified control over nuclear weapons, even those which no longer lie within the confines of Russian territory. The state will continue with bilateral negotiations to withdraw troops from the independent republics, which formerly belonged to the Soviet Union. Russia will oppose the stationing and build-up of third country forces in the republics bordering the Russian state.

Russia and the United States. Russia realizes that there are some common, long-term interests between both nations. The United States can be useful in assisting Russia in the

process of defense industry conversion. The Foreign Ministry concedes that disarmament will bring unilateral benefits to the United States.

Russia and East Europe. Russia does not want Eastern Europe to become a unified political force which could isolate Russia from the West. The transition of the former Warsaw Pact countries to a free market economy will occur in an environment of instability. This is a potential crisis area with which Russia has some concern.

Russia and the Baltic Countries. Russia will seek to obtain mutually acceptable agreements with the Baltic states to insure rights for Russian speakers in the republics of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. In addition, Russia wants port, road and rail access in the region and communications links with Kaliningrad.

Russia and Japan. Russia realizes that it will not obtain economic concessions from Japan unless it can reach an agreement on the territorial dispute with the Kurile Islands.

Russia and China. Differences in ideology will prevent an alliance between Russia and China, however, the countries will seek to reduce inter-border tension by reducing the number of armed forces in the border area.

Russia and the Middle East. Stability in the region is in Moscow's best interests. Russia will not allow Iraq or Libya to upset the balance in the region and will continue to participate in a solution to Arab-Israeli differences.



(Information extracted from Moscow Interfax in English 0703 2  
November 1992 and transmitted via Kyodo, Japan 020842Z  
November 1992. The item relates to a 31 October 1992  
transmittal of "Special Addition: Diplomatic Panorama -  
Concept of Russia's Foreign Policy)

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